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replaces the experiences of a genuinely historical Jesus with social values. Christianity (in the theological sense of the term) is more than a religious philosophy; it is a *religion* born of personal loyalty and with the trust that comes from confidence that the word has taken flesh and has worked in actual life the "creed of creeds."

SHAILER MATHEWS

IGNATIUS AND THE ODIST

Perhaps it is worth while to draw attention to a certain amount of similarity not so much between the Ignatian letters and the early Christian hymns which Dr. Harris had recovered, as between Ignatius and the Odist.

This likeness seems the more significant since they are so evidently different in their pursuits and still more in certain pre-eminent features of their character. Ignatius is a practical man (*Phil.* viii): "I have done my part as a man prepared to bring unity." Unity spiritual and practical is the one thing he seems to care for. Though his exaltation may have led him to overrate the importance of his efforts in this direction yet none but a man with a strong hand could write that line (*Rom.* ix): "Remember in your prayer the church in Syria which instead of *me* is to have God for its shepherd. Jesus Christ will [now] alone be her bishop. . . ." And only a character which did not lack a real firmness could ever insist so vehemently and yet persistently on the monarchical principle in the organization of the church, waiving all objections and difficulties with a steadfast conviction.

Men objected to a bishop who was very sparing in words. A bishop should preach and speak—Ignatius replies with authority (*Eph.* vi): "And forasmuch as one sees a bishop silent, he ought to fear him more. For anyone whom the master of the house sends to take care of his own household we ought so to accept as if he were the sender himself. Therefore it is clear that the bishop must be looked upon as if he were the Lord Himself." Now Ignatius being himself a bishop, his reasoning here comes dangerously near a vicious circular argument. But this is really not the case. For his own conscience he must have been quite right: *The source of his authority is a special inspiration, of which he is conscious and which for his feeling is enforced by his impending martyrdom.*

Here is a point of agreement with the Odist which must not be overlooked. The inspiration of Ignatius is of course preconditioned by his being an ecclesiastic of strong temper, yet his conviction of it is as firm

and intense as is the case with the poet who may have been his older contemporary. We may compare, e.g., *Phil.* vii:

If some have tried to lead me astray as to the flesh, yet *the Spirit* does not go astray, being from God. For He knows from where He is coming and where He tends to, and He convicts the hidden [thoughts]. I have cried out, in the midst of their speaking, with a strong voice, *a voice of God*: "cleave to the bishop and the presbytery and the deacons." If some have suspected me that I said these words from a knowledge of the schismatic tendencies of some, [Christ] is my witness, in whom I am fettered, *that I did not know this from human flesh. But the Spirit proclaimed*, saying thus: "Do nothing without the bishop. Consider your flesh as God's temple. Love unity, shun schisms. Be imitators of Jesus Christ as He himself is of His Father."

The same indwelling of the Spirit is claimed by the Odist, e.g., in Ode VI:

1. As the hand moves over the harp, and the strings speak
2. So *speaks in my members the Spirit of the Lord*
12. Blessed are the *ministers of that draught*, who are *entrusted* with that water of his
19. For *everyone knew them* in the Lord and they lived by living water for ever.

Here the Odist is also looking on persons who bear authority based on inspiration, and if the draught be a sacramental draught, the "ministers" which "everyone knew in the Lord" may eventually have been the same officials Ignatius is contending for. But whether they were or were not, from this ode and others proceeds clearly that the martyr and the Odist are at one in their *claim for an authoritative teaching* based on inspiration. They claim this prerogative for themselves and for their spiritual equals. The measure of this equality is of course taken in different ways by the poet or the bishop but the fact itself is clear enough.

This *authority is taken in full earnest* by both of them, though the exercise of it must have differed altogether. Without indulging in any speculation on this point, we may yet feel rather sure that neither Ignatius nor the Odist has considered as a mere rhetorical flourish the thoughts which the latter expresses in Ode XXIX.

6. For I believed in the Lord's Christ: and it was seen by me that He is *the Lord*
7. And He showed me His *sign*, and He led me by His light and gave me the *rod of His power*;

8. That I might *subdue the imaginations* of the peoples and the power of the men to bring them low;
9. To *make war by His word*, and to take victory by His power.
10. And the *Lord overthrew my* enemy by His word, etc.

Though the practical cry "unity" which Ignatius carried also into his theological reflections is absent from this ode, we have no reason to doubt that these words were spoken from his heart. Of course the Odist does not so much enlarge on the Cross as the bishop on his way to the arena and the lions, but the program of what must have been his life is here.

Both of them front the masses. Their strength is in a personal vocation. Their confidence finally rests on a feeling of special inspiration which equips them for their task.

The fact of the Odist's substituting his own personality and his *own sufferings* for those of Christ recurs also, though in a restrained form, in the letters of the Syrian bishop. Behind this fact we must suppose a common conception of some mystical significance of the personal hardships which they both suffered for Christ's sake in following up the promptings of their inspiration. Going back we are then apt to think of some cognate utterances of St. Paul, and looking forward we meet the idea of a sort of vicarious suffering in some way realized by the extravagances of asceticism.

One is tempted to think that the *Odist's standing* was a more easy one and that his claim of inspired teaching conveyed by means of his utterances was less strenuously met by his opponents than is the case in the Ignatian letters. I cannot see one clear passage in the Odes behind which we might get a glimpse of what is portrayed in *Phil.* viii, 2:

I beseech you, do nothing *κατ' ἐπίθειαν*, but *κατὰ χριστομαθίαν*. For I have heard some people saying: "If I do not find it in the ancient things—in the Gospel—I do not believe." And on my saying to them: "It is (Holy) Writ," they answered me: "It lies open for proof." But for me, "The ancient things" is Jesus Christ, the unviolable ancient (palladia) are His cross and His death and His resurrection and the faith wrought by Him.

The Odist puts all the stress on this last point, being of course more the man of the inward life. Yet *the earlier three are not absent*. They are—for the Odist's manner—conspicuous in Ode XLII:

1. I stretched out my hand and approached my Lord,
2. For the stretching of my hands is *His sign*.
3. *My expansion is the outspread tree* which was set upon the way of the righteous one.

Then the execution by the malice of the Jews and the Lord's resurrection together with the significance of that fact are slightly touched upon:

4. And I became of no account to those who did not take hold of me (cf. John 14:30), and I shall be with those who love me.
5. All my persecutors are dead; and they sought after me, who hoped in me—because I was alive—
6. And *I rose up* and am with them, and I will speak by their mouths. . . .
8. And *I lifted up over them the yoke of my love*. . . .

Ignatius speaks of these same points but in a much more forcible way when giving a testimony to the Christian character of the Smyrnaean church (*Smyrn.* i):

For I knew you as perfected in immoveable faith as if you were *fixed by nails to the cross* of the Lord Jesus Christ with flesh and spirit (2) whose (i.e. Christ's) fruit we are that He might *lift up a sign* to eternity through His *resurrection for His holy and faithful people*.

Ode XIX is a rock of offense. The language is too oriental for our taste which, however, does not imply that a Christian audience at another place and time would have received a similar shock. Ignatius, e.g., indulges in metaphors which go far in this same direction, e.g., *Rom.* vii, 3: "I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, who is from the seed of David, and I desire as a drink his blood, which is incorruptible love." Though we are accustomed to expressions of the same type, e.g., in a well-known chapter of St. John, yet the fact of a rather bold and harsh metaphor exists none the less. Equally harsh is *Trall.* viii: ". . . in faith which is the flesh of the Lord and in love which is the blood of Jesus Christ."

There is a compactness in such language which reminds one of *Semitic mentality*. Ignatius, *Eph.* xviii, 1: *περίψημα τὸ ἐμὸν πνεῦμα τοῦ σταυροῦ*, has quite the air of a Hebrew or Syriac nominal clause with a downright *status constructus*. "Offscouring my cross-spirit" is no Greek, and must have been a horror even to Epictetus. It is even beyond the papyri.

But people who can speak and write in this way are apt to think in a corresponding shorthand manner when elevated to the higher grounds of eloquence or poetry. When the Odist is singing (Ode XI): "*My heart was cloven* [circumcised, i.e.,¹ pruned?] and its flower appeared; and

¹ *Gzar* usually means "to circumcise." Payne-Smith, *Thes. Syr.*, does not mention a meaning "to prune." Yet the derivative uses of *gzar* are many and show so much freedom in handling the primitive meaning, that we may be allowed to call the "circumcision" of a fruit-tree pruning.

grace sprang up in it: and it brought forth *fruit* to the Lord," the same spiritual fact is before the eyes of the martyr-bishop, who expresses it in a corresponding, though less beautiful, manner (*Trall.* xi) when denouncing his adversaries: "For these are no *planting* of the Father. Then, if they were, they would appear as '*branches of the Cross*' and their *fruit* would be imperishable."

This "planting" is an idea which the Odist has woven into Ode XXXVIII, where the idea of suffering—so prominent in Ignatius' mind that he is condensing it everywhere in the use of the "cross"—is also present in the very reduced form of "danger."

. . . He established me

18. For He set the root and watered it and fixed it and blessed it; and its fruits are for ever

19. It struck deep and sprung up and spread out, and was full and enlarged,

20. And the Lord alone was glorified in His planting and in His husbandry: by His care and by the blessing of His lips,

21. By the beautiful planting of His right hand: and by the discovery of His planting and by the thought of His mind.

Ignatius is twice using this same *botanical metaphor*, but in both cases (*Trall.* xi; *Phil.* iii) he is speaking as a controversialist, clipping the precious coinage stamped by the prophets and poets. Such is the case also with the Odist's metaphor of the crown (*Magn.* xiii): . . . ἀξιοπλόκου πνευματικοῦ στεφάνου τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου ὑμῶν. This "crown worthy to be twined" is the presbytery. There is a great difference here with the beautiful words "The Lord is on my head like a living crown"—but for Ignatius a living "crown" is after all an expression of enthusiasm, fired at the sight of his Christian and organizatory ideals embodied in a circle of living men. For this beauty the eyes of the poet were perhaps shut.

But they are brought quite near to each other by the *experiences of their innermost life*. In *Rom.* vii we read: "For I write to you while yet living but loving to die. My love has been crucified and there is no matter-loving fire (πῦρ φιλόῦλον) in me, but a *living and speaking water within me, that is saying: Onward to the Father*." Here the mystic and the poet in the bishop are roused by the anticipation of martyrdom—and his words are such as constantly recur in the Odes. It would be needless to copy the places, where inward comfort and refreshment, the cool shades of rest, the experience of the inspiration of a quiet soul, are condensed in this pregnant simile "living and speaking water." "Onward to the Father" is the sound of unity in the divergent characters of both.

There is more of this. The difference between both characters and their *unity in enthusiasm* is grafted imperishably in the strong and living words of Ode VII:

As the impulse of anger against evil so is the impulse of joy over what is lovely.

Surely the Odist would not have failed to understand the impetuous character of Ignatius and would have appreciated somehow his angry anxiety for a harmonious and well-ordered life in the churches, which he came to visit.

On the other hand Ignatius was surely much more inclined to *restfulness and joy* than his letters at first sight would suggest. With a consistency in which perhaps a good deal of sympathy may be suspected he defends his colleagues that are called "silent." We may recall *Eph.* vii quoted above, but the same fact recurs in *Phil.* i, where the bishop of the place is said "to have more influence when silent than those people who speak vanity." So in *Rom.* ii he himself beseeches his friends to "keep away from him *in silence* [σιωπήσῃτε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ], then *he will become a word of God* [λόγος θεοῦ], but if you become again amorous of my flesh, I shall again be an echo" (πάλιν ἔσομαι ἡχώ). This surely is again a confession tinged by a sort of mysticism akin to that of the Odist. This observation adds some weight to another similarity, *Eph.* xv, 2: "Who has truly *acquired the mind* [λόγος] *of Jesus*, is able to *hear also His rest* [δύναται καὶ τῆς ἡσυχίας αὐτοῦ ἀκοῦειν] that he may be perfect, so that he [or "He"?] may be *working through what he speaks* and may be known through *his silence*." (Better: that his words may be deeds and his silence a speech.) Ode XXVI has:

1. I poured out praise to the Lord *for I am His*:
2. And I will speak His holy song, for my heart is with Him
3. For His harp is in my hands and the *Odes of His rest* shall not be silent
-
13. *For it suffices to know and to rest: for in rest the singers stand. . . .*

Of less importance may be the fact that "the harp" in the Odes is a spiritual harp, being probably a living instrument of holy inspiration. But this instrument was not entirely unknown to the bishop whether it had come to his notice in Syria or elsewhere. In *Eph.* iv he writes:

For your justly renowned presbytery, worthy of God, is *so joined together with the bishop as the strings to a harp* [χορδαὶ κιθάρα]. Therefore in your unanimity and harmonious love Jesus Christ is sung. And you laymen form a choir, in order that you, being harmonious in unanimity, receiving your cadence from God, in one voice may sing to the Father through Jesus Christ. . . .

Of the "silent" bishop mentioned in *Phil.* i, Ignatius uses the same words: "for he is in such a harmonious accord with the commandments as the harp with its strings."

The singing in a choir recurs once more in *Rom.* ii, 2, "that you, forming a choir in love, may sing to the Father in Christ Jesus."

The interest in music and poetry which is displayed in these sentences is suggestive of a *possibility of much nearer contact* in these early days between poets, like our Odist, and churchmen even of a militant type, than one might at first sight be inclined to suspect.

We may not pass in silence the striking similarity of feeling in the domain of *eschatology and apocalyptic thought*. Ignatius, e.g., gives in *Eph.* xix a short sketch of an apocalyptic discourse, which he promises to pursue in "a second booklet." The topic of this treatise was to be (*Eph.* xx) the *οικονομία εἰς τὸν καινὸν ἄνθρωπον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν*, but he is feeling the need of a special apocalyptic inspiration to treat worthily of this theme (*μάλιστα ἐὰν ὁ κύριός μοι ἀποκαλύψῃ τι*). Now if we turn to Ode XVIII we find these apocalyptic strings resounding there also:

4. The choking bonds were cut off by his (?) hands: I received the face and the fashion of a new person.

In the rest of this ode the poet clothed with this new personality speaks and acts as if *transformed into Christ's nature*. "Closed doors" are opened, bars of iron broken and melted, "nothing appeared closed to me because I was the door of everything." Much more prominent is this character in Ode XXII with its dragon, or XXIII with the mysterious celestial document and the "wheel." Ode XXXVIII contains also a strong apocalyptic element. We do not know how Ignatius would have spoken from the heights of apocalyptic vision, but *his themes are surely not strange to the Odist's mind*. This appears from *Eph.* xix:

And from the Ruler of this aeon was hidden the *Virginity of Mary* and her *Giving Birth*, likewise also the Death of the Lord: three loudly resounding *mysteries* which have been wrought in God's rest [*ἄτινα ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ θεοῦ ἐπράχθη*] How then was it made visible to the aeons? A star was lighted in heaven above all the stars, and its light was unspeakable, and wonder was roused by its newness. And all the other stars together with the sun and the moon formed a choir for the star, but He was increasing his light above everything. There was a confusion also, whence might be this newness unlike to them.

And from this cause all magic and every tie of evil was annihilated. *Lack of knowledge* was destroyed, the old kingdom was given over to decay through God's revelation in human form to a newness of eternal life; what was prepared by God took a beginning.

For this reason the whole was in commotion since the extermination of Death was purposed.

Now among other parallels, two are important here. Firstly, that the destroying of *Agnoia*, "Lack of knowledge," is one of the first fruits of the "oeconomia toward [or "in"] the new man." The Odist often seems to differ from the type of Christianity represented by Ignatius in laying much more stress on truth and error than on the Cross, but Ignatius also is not much engrossed by the idea of personal sin. Atonement as conceived by him may have been much more an "illumination," a "salvation from error" than anything else, and his "Cross" might perhaps be represented as a cross of light.

But still more important is the *coincidence with Ode XIX*. There also the virginity of Mary and the Birth are hymned as mysteries. We cannot guess on this point what particular concept was in the mind of Ignatius as being "hidden from the Ruler of this aeon," but when the thoughts which he combines with the star are so startling, we may presume that he would not have heard without edification the passage, which to some scholars seems incongruous with the elevated tone of other odes.

Finally without pressing this point attention may be drawn to the fact that for Ignatius the words *temple* and even *altar* have a meaning which is entirely spiritual. This is also often the case in the Pauline and Johannine writings and elsewhere, and seems to call for a revision of the arguments based on the supposed presence of the Jewish sanctuary in some of the odes.

As an appropriate title for this collection of odes the words "God and the soul" have been suggested. Much may be said for the acceptance of such a designation as being perfectly true to the spirit of the poet, only it must be remembered that it is not the poet's soul alone but a larger circle of cognate minds which was thus singing the praises of the Lord and joining with him in a spiritual choir.

The *other-worldliness*, the mystic atmosphere in which the Odist breathes, gives at first the impression of being wholly personal and exceptional. Yet we hear even Ignatius confessing (*Rom.* iii): Οὐδὲν φαινόμενον ἀγαθόν: "Nothing in this world of appearances is good." Even Ignatius, however intent he may be on the organization and the discipline necessary for a living Church, is longing also for the "Pure Light" above. He beseeches the Roman brethren not to mar his upward flight by their love. His only desire is "to acquire God."

On this ground both the bishop and the poet meet and from this point

of view the eschatological vision of earlier days, as far as we can separate this from apocalyptic conceptions, falls a little back, though it is not absent.

From these remarks one point results, viz., the possibility of spiritual fellowship between the Odist and Ignatius. This is perhaps a fact of some importance. We may probably feel justified, therefore, in declining any attempt to remove this poet from the wider domain of the nascent catholic church, since even such a strong supporter of its cause as Ignatius undoubtedly was has so much in common with him. Literary dependence is out of the question, but *spiritual kinship* is so clear in this case, notwithstanding the evident difference in character and pursuits, that one may feel sure of its testimony. Moreover, if there were some more knowledge to be had of first-century Christian ritual and liturgy, if we could hear the early "prophets" addressing their audience, or catch the tune and words of these hymns, which according to Pliny were sung in their choirs, probably these Odes would appear but one collection out of many.

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